

campaign to raise awareness and money to stage the parade and a veterans' resource event to follow. The January 28 Group is partnering with St. Louis-based veterans service organizations, including The Mission Continues, which works to help veterans transfer their military leadership skills to civilian life.

They say Missouri is the "Show-Me" State, but this time the compassionate and patriotic people of St. Louis are showing the Nation just how quickly you can mobilize to give back to those who have given so much to our Nation.

I salute you all, and wish you success for the returning heroes parade at noon this coming Saturday, January 28, in downtown St. Louis.

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING A BUDGET

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there are consequences of not having a budget. One of them is you don't make proper plans. How else can you explain the Obama administration going so long and crying so loudly, Gee, we can't find \$10 billion to cut, much less \$100 billion? We certainly aren't going to cut a trillion even though we increase spending by a trillion.

And we find out last week from the Obama OMB that there is \$687 billion sitting in accounts that's been appropriated. It's unobligated. It's unspent, sitting there, and they're still demanding more and more money.

America can't afford it. It's time to claw back the money before it's spent on other Solyndras and to give us a budget at the other end of the building.

CLEAN ENERGY IN MAINE

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about some exciting developments in clean energy in my State of Maine.

Last week, Energy Secretary Chu released a report detailing the enormous potential for tidal energy off of U.S. coasts. There is enough there to meet up to one-third of our needs, and he singled out Maine, saying, "These resources can create new industries and new jobs in America."

He's right, and we're proving it. The Ocean Renewable Power Company of Portland is building a tidal power project in Maine that, if all goes as planned, will start producing clean, American-made electricity as early as this summer.

Meanwhile, we're welcoming one of the biggest energy companies in the world to our State. Statoil from Norway is considering a pilot project of large-scale wind turbines that would produce clean electricity while floating out of view off our coast. Experts say

up to 15,000 jobs can be created in my State by offshore wind, good-paying American jobs that will help us regain our energy independence.

This is good news off our coast, Mr. Speaker, for Maine and our country.

VISION OF AN AMERICA BUILT TO LAST

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, the President will deliver the State of the Union tonight. I expect to hear his vision of an America built to last.

Mr. Speaker, let's listen together. Let's remember together. We must remember how and why we are the greatest Nation in the world. We must remember those American values that built this Nation. We must remember how, in building this Nation, the middle class emerged and how they are our backbone and how they are our foundation.

Hard work, pride, and being a just and fair Nation is what makes us great. Let us look to the past. Remember its lessons to build the future.

FUTURE OF MIDDLE CLASS

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union address tonight is going to be very important, and I agree with President Obama that this is a make-or-break moment for the middle class and those trying to reach it.

And what's at stake is the very survival of the basic American promise that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, and put a little bit away for retirement. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while more Americans barely get by, or we can build a Nation where everyone gets a fair shot, he says, everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same rules.

We found out today that, especially when it comes to taxes, there really are different rules for the rich. Mitt Romney released his taxes. He made \$42 million over the last 2 years and paid at about a 14.5 percent rate because most of his income is in capital gains.

Look at the tax brackets. If you make \$8,500 as a single person, you're in a 15-percent tax bracket. Is that fair? I don't think so.

AMERICANS LIVING ON EDGE TODAY

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Too many of our fellow Americans are living on the

edge today and have been for far too long. The last thing they need is another showdown at the Not-OK Corral.

They need jobs. They need to save or go back into their homes. And for those who have been living in poverty or those who used to be in the middle class but are now struggling to survive below the poverty level, they need us to help provide the opportunity to help lift them and their families out of poverty and to a better life. Our President is coming to us tonight to again offer us some opportunities to do all of these things and more and to restore our country's economic health.

So let's not put our fellow Americans through another cliffhanger on things that are important to their well-being. Let us pass the payroll and unemployment insurance extension, fix the Medicare payment issue without drama, and come together to work on the bipartisan measures that the President will ask us to pass for our people and our country.

INCLUDE PUERTO RICO IN SSI PROGRAM

(Mr. PIERLUISI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced legislation that would extend the SSI program to Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and Guam.

SSI provides cash assistance to blind, disabled, or elderly individuals who have limited or no income. Although SSI applies in the States, it does not apply in Puerto Rico, which instead receives a block grant to assist its most vulnerable residents.

Of all the disparities that Puerto Rico faces because of its territory status, this is perhaps the most harmful. Puerto Rico's annual grant is about \$35 million. By contrast, the Nation's poorest State, with almost 1 million fewer residents, received over \$740 million in SSI funding in 2010.

While in the States beneficiaries receive about \$500 each month, Puerto Rico residents receive only \$70. Residents of Puerto Rico are American citizens, but when it comes to SSI, their citizenship is second class.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this bill.

□ 1230

RETURN "SESAME STREET" TO PALESTINIAN AIRWAVES

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I brought a friend to the floor with me today. As we all know, this is Elmo. This guy taught us our 1, 2, 3s, but he also taught us tolerance and understanding. For the past several years, he's been doing the same thing for children in the Palestinian territories. Because of "Sesame Street" in Palestine,